AUTONOMY
BLOCK 1.1

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Basic Principles: ABCD
1. Autonomy
2. Beneficence: Doing Well
3. Confidentiality
4. Do Not Harm: Non-Maleficence
5. Equality and Fairness: Justice
6. Truth telling
7. Preservation of Life

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Intended Learning Outcome

- Patients Autonomy and Importance.
- Rights of Patient
- Consent, Decision Taking Capacity, Disclosure, Voluntariness and Truth telling with respect to Patient autonomy.
- Ethical and legal issues in autonomy.

AUTONOMY

- Autonomy, literally meaning self-rule, has been defined as the capacity to think, decide, and act on the basis of such thought and decision, freely and independently (Gillon, 1986).
- “Right of patients to make decisions without any influence”.
- Allow Doctor to educate but does not allow to make the decision for the patient.

Case Scenario: Autonomy

- A 55-year-old man has a 3-month history of chest pain and fainting spells. You feel his symptoms merit cardiac catheterization. You explain the risks and potential benefits to him, and include your assessment of his likely prognosis without the intervention. He is able to demonstrate that he understands all of this, but refuses the intervention.
- Can he do that, legally? Should you leave it at that?
Discussion

- This patient understands what is at stake with his treatment refusal. As he is competent to make this decision, you have a duty to respect his choice. However, you should also be sure to explore his reasons for refusing treatment and continue to discuss your recommendations.
- A treatment refusal should be honored, but it should also not be treated as the end of a discussion.

PATERNALISM

- The policy or practice on the part of people in authority of restricting the freedom and responsibilities of those subordinate to or otherwise dependent on them in their supposed interest.

Rights of Patient to have

- Medical Treatment in full dignity
- Access information related to treatment
- Choices of treatment and No.
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Complaint.
- Live
- Receive respect and honor from doctors
Autonomy vs Beneficence

AUTONOMY: WHAT TO DO
1. Respect Patient’s right to make his own decisions
2. Teach patient’s to be able to make their own choices
3. Support patient in their individual choices
4. Do not force patient to do things
5. ‘Informed Consent’ is an important outcome of this principle

Patient refusing treatment
- Fear and Anxiety.
- Improper information
- Poor Doctor-Patient relation
- Incompetency
- Financial Burden

Consent
- Consent can be defined as the “Autonomous Authorization of a medical intervention by individual patients”.
- Permission for compliance of certain act

Consent has three components:
- Capacity,
- Disclosure
- Voluntariness.
TYPES OF CONSENT

1. IMPLIED CONSENT.
2. EXPRESSED:
   1. Oral or Verbal
   2. Written Consent
3. INFORMED CONSENT.
4. Surrogate Consent: Consent given by Legally authorized persons

Informed Consent

- It is consent [Permission] obtained after giving proper information to the patient and the patient understand what is going on.

Requirement of patient understanding:
1. The Nature of Applied Procedure
2. The risk involved in treatment
3. The consequences or outcome of treatment
4. The alternatives treatment

Competency & Capacity

- Ahliyyat is the intellectual capacity to understand, analyze, and judge information.
- Capacity is “functional abilities” to make a specific decision.
- Patient is psychologically or legally capable of adequate decision-making.

Requirement of Capacity

- Validity: Has to be made when competent
- Applicability
  - Have anticipated the situation [Disclosure]
  - And the implications of the decision
  - The decision must be Voluntary

What is Your Opinion in ??

- Decision taken by a minor [Child]?
- Decision Taken by Insane
- Decision Taken by Family Members
DISCLOSURE

- It means to provide **provide information** about a proposed medical investigation or treatment **to the patient**.

Voluntariness

- Patient’s right to make treatment decisions and decisions about his or her personal information free of any undue influence.
- Voluntariness is an ethical requirement of valid consent.

Truth Telling

- It is practice and attitude of being open with patients
- Authenticity and genuineness Doctor and patient relationship.
- Avoidance of Lying, Misrepresentation, and Non-disclosure in interactions.
- “truth” might harm the patient.
Summary and Conclusion

- Autonomy is the right of patients to make decisions without any influence.
- Patients have the right to take treatment or refuse treatment.
- Consent, capacity, disclosure, voluntariness, confidentiality, and truth telling are important components of autonomy.

Further Reading

- The students handbook of Medical Ethics - Y1
- Cambridge Textbook of Bioethics.
- Ethics of Medical Profession by Saudi Council of Health Specialties.

Books Recommended

1. Students Handbook of Medical Ethics: Y1 [College Manual]
2. Code of Ethics for Healthcare Practitioners [SCHS]
4. Cambridge textbook of Bioethics by Peter A. Singer and A.M. Veins
References


Any Further Clarification

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